

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

*This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:*

1-22. (Canceled)

23. (Currently amended) A process for the storage of a protein in an aqueous solution, comprising adding an amount of cysteine effective to delay the temporal decrease in the effective concentration of the protein by ~~preventing~~ reducing chemical modification of SH groups on the protein during storage, wherein the effective concentration does not decrease by more than about 7%.

24. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 23, wherein the effective concentration does not decrease by more than about 3%.

25. (Currently amended) The process as claimed in claim 23, wherein the protein is a heterologous protein ~~prepared~~ produced in an organism ~~a microorganism~~.

26. (Currently amended) The process as claimed in claim ~~25~~ 68, wherein the microorganism is a bacterium.

27. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in 26, wherein the bacterium is *Escherichia coli*.

28. (Currently amended) The process as claimed in claim ~~25~~ 68, wherein the microorganism is a yeast.

29. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 28, wherein the yeast is *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*.

30. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 28, wherein the yeast is *Pichia pastoris*.

31. (Currently amended) The process as claimed in claim 23, wherein the protein is a heterologous protein and is ~~prepared~~ produced in an insect cell.
32. (Currently amended) The process as claimed in claim 25 or claim 31, wherein the protein is ~~prepared from~~ encoded by an expression vector ~~construct~~.
33. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 23, wherein the protein is present in dissolved form.
34. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 23, wherein the protein is present in suspension.
35. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 23, wherein the storage of the protein takes place at about 0°C to about 50°C.
36. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 35, wherein the storage of the protein takes place at about 5°C to about 30°C.
37. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 35, wherein the storage of the protein takes place at about 5°C.
38. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 23, wherein the protein is insulin, an insulin derivative, or a precursor thereof.
39. (Previously presented) A process for the preparation and storage of a heterologous protein, comprising the expression of the heterologous protein or a precursor thereof in a transformed microorganism, optional disruption of the microorganism and/or isolation of the heterologous protein or its precursor from the culture medium, and the subsequent storage of the heterologous protein according to the process of claim 23.
40. (Currently amended) The process of claim 39, further comprising the renaturation of the heterologous protein or its precursor and the purification ~~and isolation~~ of the heterologous protein, including optional removal of a leader sequence or other sequences that may be present in the precursor of the heterologous protein,

41. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 39, wherein the heterologous protein is animal insulin.

42. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 41, wherein the animal insulin is human insulin.

43. (Currently amended) A process for the storage of a protein in an aqueous solution, comprising adding an amount of cysteine effective to delay the temporal decrease in the effective concentration of the protein by ~~preventing~~ reducing chemical modification of SH groups on the protein during a period of greater than 24 hours.

44. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 43, wherein the temporal decrease in the effective concentration of the protein is delayed for a period of 48 hours or more.

45. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 43, wherein the temporal decrease in the effective concentration of the protein is delayed for a period of 1 week or more.

46. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 43, wherein the temporal decrease in the effective concentration of the protein is delayed for a period of 2 weeks or more.

47. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 43, wherein the temporal decrease in the effective concentration of the protein is delayed for a period of 4 weeks or more.

48. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 43, wherein the temporal decrease in the effective concentration of the protein is delayed for a period of 8 weeks or more.

49. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 43, wherein the temporal decrease in the effective concentration of the protein is delayed for a period of from greater than 24 hours to 2 months.

50. (Currently amended) The process as claimed in claim 43, wherein the protein is a heterologous protein ~~prepared~~ produced in an organism ~~a microorganism~~.

51. (Currently amended) The process as claimed in claim ~~50~~ 69, wherein the microorganism is a bacterium.

52. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 51, wherein the bacterium is *Escherichia coli*.

53. (Currently amended) The process as claimed in claim 50 ~~60~~ 69, wherein the microorganism is a yeast.

54. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 53, wherein the yeast is *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*.

55. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 53, wherein the yeast is *Pichia pastoris*.

56. (Currently amended) The process as claimed in claim 43, wherein the protein is a heterologous protein and is ~~prepared~~ produced in an insect cell.

57. (Currently amended) The process as claimed in claim 50 or claim 56, wherein the protein is ~~prepared from~~ encoded by an expression vector-~~construct~~.

58. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 43, wherein the protein is present in dissolved form.

59. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 43, wherein the protein is present in suspension.

60. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 43, wherein the storage of the protein takes place at about 0°C to about 50°C.

61. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 60, wherein the storage of the protein takes place at about 5°C to about 30°C.

62. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 60, wherein the storage of the protein takes place at about 5°C.

63. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 43, wherein the protein stored is insulin, an insulin derivative, or a precursor thereof.

64. (Previously presented) A process for the preparation and storage of a heterologous protein, comprising the expression of the heterologous protein or its precursor in a transformed microorganism, optional disruption of the microorganism and/or isolation of the heterologous protein or its precursor from the culture medium, and the subsequent storage of the heterologous protein according to the process of claim 43.

65. (Currently amended) The process of claim 64, further comprising the renaturatlon of the heterologous protein or its precursor and the purification ~~and isolation~~ of the heterologous protein, including optional removal of a leader sequence or other sequences that may be present in the precursor of the heterologous protein.

66. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 64, wherein the heterologous protein is animal insulin.

67. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 64, wherein the animal insulin is human insulin.

68. (New) The process as claimed in claim 25, wherein the organism is a microorganism.

69. (New) The process as claimed in claim 50, wherein the organism is a microorganism.